ABSTRACT

A switching device for telecommunication networks, which comprises a) a number of I/O ports for inputting incoming data streams and outputting outgoing data streams of arbitrary protocols, b)a switching fabric SF for handling internal data streams, c) a number of adaptation functional blocks AFBs associated with the switching fabric SF. Each AFB is capable of performing at least one of the following adaptation functions:

- converting one or more of the incoming data streams or portions thereof into one or more internal data streams, and

- converting one or more of the internal data streams handled by the SF into one or more outgoing data streams or portions thereof.

The switching device also comprises a distribution block DB adapted to allow switching between the I/O ports and the adaptation functional blocks AFBs and so configurable to provide a required selectable connection between any of the I/O ports and any of the adaptation functional blocks AFBs.